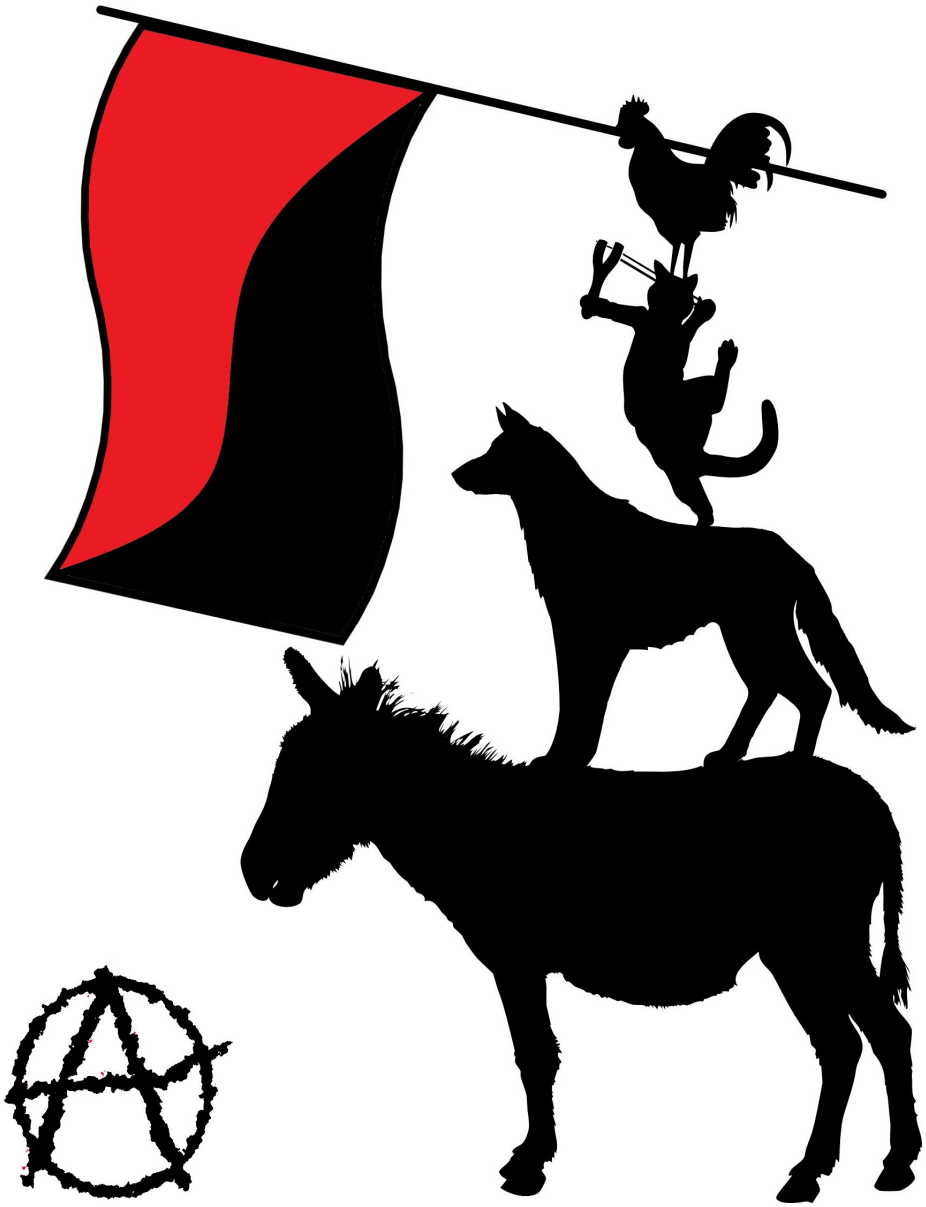
Tabea Feix

anarchistic-syndicalistic

sightseeing walk



for Bremen City Center (Germany)

The sightseeing walk

The pure distance is about 2 km, approximately a 30-minute walk.
You decide how much time and breaks you take.

fig. 1: Sightseeing walk through the city of Bremen. Beginning is at the bottom right.

You can search this adresses virtual with „28195 Bremen, Germany“:

1. Buchtstraße 14/15 → Venue of FAU 2004-2009
2. Violenstraße 13 → Residence of August Pansch 1925
3. Violenstraße 37 → Birthplace of Hermann Häfker 1873
4. Domshof 22 → Events with A. Metz 1928/ P. Ramus 1930
5. Lloydpassage → Birthplace of Karl Künitz 1877
6. Ansgaritränkpforte 2 → Expropriation trial by August Isleif 1913
7. Langenstraße 25-29 → Workplace of Erna Kolthek 1941
8. Langenstraße 14 → Forbidden handing-out of flyers 1929
9. Martinistraße 27 → Residence of Ernst Töniges 1913/1914
10. Böttcherstraße 3-5 → Theodor Winter sen. (and jun.) 1902

Tourist-program:

11. Marktplatz → Marketplace, town hall, Roland
12. Schoppensteel → Bremen Town Musicians
13. Domshof / Sandstraße → Spitting stone

Not yet tired?

14. Schnoor 38 → Residence of Karl Künitz 1919

Introduction

Many more people than generally known have engaged in anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism in Bremen in the past. That means they fought against capitalism, church, war and the state, against the domination of people over other people. They fought for solidarity, freedom, and emancipation: For a better life for everyone. The traces of these struggles and the people who fought them are hard to find within the Marxist and Hanseatic-influenced culture of remembrance. With this booklet, you can now walk in anarcho-syndicalist footsteps, self-organized and freely explored. It is meant to be an impetus to think for yourself and get involved, instead of just consuming: Towards a free, socialist society.

For the sake of better readability, footnotes have been omitted in the spirit of a free presentation. If you're interested in something specific, I'll look it up for you. Many of the informations I gathered come from Helge Döhring's book "Zwischen Hafenarbeit und Sexualhygiene" (Between Dock Work and Sexual Hygiene), see the last page. The remaining information mostly comes from the State Archives Bremen (StAB), the State Archives Berlin (LAB), the State Archives NRW-Rhineland (LAV R), the Federal Archives (BA), and contemporary newspapers. They came together for my planned environmental study, see also last page. The data on the buildings is from the State Office for Monument Preservation Bremen, and the Bremen history is from Schwarzwälder, specifically researched for this issue.

This text is formulated in such a way that as many people as possible can understand it. It should not matter how well you know this language, how often you read otherwise, or if you have other reasons for not being able to read well. The booklet is an educational resource. This way, you can form your own thoughts and fight free from paternalistic influences, for your self-empowerment and emancipation.

For a calm and relaxed experience, I recommend taking the walk on Sunday morning around 8:00 AM. Good alternatives are also after store closing around 8:00 PM or on holidays. Around 9:30 AM, 10:00 AM, and 5:00 PM, I would avoid the area around the churches because of the bells. If the passages are closed, just go around the block.

fig. 2: Advertisement for an event by FAU Bremen on the eve of May 1, 2006 in the House of the Naturfreundejugend (Nature Friends Youth) Bremen, Buchtstr. 14/15, called "Buchte".
It means: The dance is going on! Party in the month of May! On April 30th,
2006 at Buchtstr. 14/15, from 8:00 PM concert.

1. Buchtstraße 14/15, „Buchte“

Venue of FAU 2004-2009 and later

We start the tour at this location because you might have just received this leaflet here or you might even be at a festival here right now. The Naturfreundejugend is known in Bremen for its family-friendly, variegated street festivals, on May 1st or in the summer.

This is the station with the most recent history: From 1998 until after 2010, there was an FAU in Bremen. The origins of an anarcho-syndicalist union in the Federal Republic of Germany date back to the 1970s. Often, FAU syndicates were more like discussion circles than union struggle organizations. In Bremen, things looked a bit different. The local FAU even had a union venue at „Am Schwarzen Meer“ in Bremen-Peterswerder for a short while. In the House of the Naturfreundjugend, the FAU found a new meeting place, as their grassroots democratic organization aligned with the views of anarcho-syndicalism. Furthermore, the FAU organized "Tanz in den Mai" (Dance into May) concerts and Working-Class-Cafés here.

What is anarcho-syndicalism?
Anarcho-syndicalism aims to abolish societal power structures: No one should rule over others. In their place, a collective self-responsibility of the people is established. The workers take over their businesses in self-management. At the same time, they organize an economy that produces based on needs. This saves resources and frees up capacities for something more beautiful than work. The produced goods are not subject to market laws and profit motives, but are distributed fairly among the people. This happens without hierarchically appointed administrations or supervisory authorities, but according to the principles of political federalism, for which council structures are created based on grassroots democratic models, called "Arbeitsbörsen" (labor exchanges) in anarcho-syndicalism. For this, we need educated, team-oriented, socially minded, and reliable people who have learned to take responsibility without exercising domination. This is represented by the anarchist principle of mutual aid and socialization through emancipatory pedagogy.

fig. 3: Advertisement for the May Dance 2009 at the House of the Naturfreundejugend Bremen, Buchtstr. 14/15, organized by the FAU, affiliated with the IAA, and the "Buchte".

fig. 4: Former Freischule (free school), Violenstraße 13, formerly Buchtstraße 20.

2. Violenstraße 13, formerly Buchtstraße 20

Freischule, resicence of the old hand anarchist August Pansch 1925

This house is not under monument protection because of the anarchists who used to live here. It was the first state free school in Bremen until 1877 (founded in 1823) and was built in 1836. The parents of the children did not have to pay tuition, which is why it was "free". After that, the building served as a temporary location for other schools. From 1919 onwards, the building was used as a residential house. Presumably, the school authority had not left the old building without reason, and it was already somewhat run-down. Living in the old school was certainly not luxurious, right in the middle of the smoky, stinky, noisy city. Rich people often lived in the quieter suburbs, with more space and better air.

Around 1925, the locksmith August Pansch (1883-1960) lived here. He was born on March 27, 1883, in Trechel, Naugard district in Pomerania, and moved to Bremen in 1908. August became active in the anarchist federation (AFD) and in the anarcho-syndicalist FVdG starting in July 1910. Both groups were newly founded in Bremen in the summer of 1910. From 1912, he was known to the police as a member of the "Freie Metallarbeiter-Vereinigung" (Free Metal Workers' Union, affiliated with the FVdG). He had to move often, likely due to the harassing political police, poor finances, and terrible living conditions. Until 1914, he mainly engaged himself as secretary and colporteur, meaning a seller of the movement's magazines. He provided the subscription address in Bremen for "Kampf" from Hamburg as well as "Der Pionier" and "Der freie Arbeiter", both newspapers from Berlin. In the 1920s, he sent donations to the FKAD, and after 1945, he was a member of the "Anarchistische Vereinigung" (anarchistic association, AV) and the BfSuA. Such a long-standing activity I find noteworthy, even though he left no personal testimonial. August Pansch maintained friendly contact with several comrades, including Ernst Töniges, who also lived in this house from around 1920 to 1922. On December 6, 1970, August Pansch was found dead in his garden plot in Bremen-Schwachhausen. He had been living there since 1944, in close proximity to comrade Bernhard Koch. More about Ernst Töniges and Bernhard Koch later.

We continue towards Domshof. Our next destination is on the same side of the street, a few houses down.

3. Violenstraße 37, formerly Buchtstraße 35

Comptoir Jacobi, birthplace of cinema reformer Hermann Häfker 1873

Here stood an office for financial transactions, stocks, and lottery: the Comptoir Jacobi. In this office, Hermann Häfker's father worked as an accountant. Here, Hermann was born on June 3, 1873.

The writer Hermann Häfker (1873-1939) published for the first time in 1896 in Berlin, initially on Shakespeare, completely without any prior training. There he met the "noble anarchist" Moritz von Egidy (1847-1898), was impressed by him and his ideas on early Christianity. From 1907 onwards, he turned to silent film theory and became a well-known cinema reformer. He did not like the profane entertainment cinema with its "Spielfilmen" (feature films). Rather, he saw cinema as an aesthetic opportunity for education for all people. Therefore, he founded a cinema reform association in Dresden in 1909 and presented innovative model screenings. During World War I, he returned to Bremen and took over his parents' house in Bremen-Ostertor. He got involved in the "Bremer Räte-Republik" (council republic) and was therefore arrested on February 4, 1919, during its suppression, while driving an automobile past the theater. In his house, he ran a speech school to equip all women and men with the tools for political debates. He engaged himself for a non-party discourse to overcome capitalism and the state and to live in solidarity with all people. Therefor he founded a "Gemeinwirtschafts-Vereinigung" (community economy association) and worked closely with the artist Heinrich Vogeler (1872-1942). Starting in 1922, he attempted to establish his own anarcho-communist project, a "work school," near Freiberg in Saxony, using the proceeds from the family estate. The basis for this was his work "Gemeinwirtschaft". Due to the inflation in 1923, he had to abandon the project. Until 1933, he wrote books for the "Dürer-Bund", to which he had been connected since 1902. He translated the Epic of Gilgamesh, a nearly 5000-year-old text, and learned the constructed language Esperanto to overcome all language differences. After 1933, the Nazis burned his "Weltgeschichte in einem Band" (World History in One Volume). In 1937, he fled to Prague to prepare the escape of his large family to the USA. During the Nazi invasion in 1938, he was arrested. They brought him, among other places, to the Dachau concentration camp and subsequently to the Mauthausen concentration camp, where he died on December 27, 1939.

Politische Redekunst
Gewalt oder Demokratie?
Vortrag
von Hermann Häfker am
Mittwoch, 27. Aug., pünktlich 8 Uhr
im Casino, Blauer Saal.
Eintritt 1 Mark.
Wissenschaftl. Gemeinwirtschafts=
Vereinigung. (WGV)

fig. 5: Annoncement of the Wissenschaftl. Gemeinwirtschafts-Vereinigung in the Bremer Arbeiter-Zeitung.

fig. 6: Hermann Häfker.

By the way, Hermann Häfker gave a lecture at the Museum am Domshof on October 28, 1916. The topic of the evening organized by the Goethe-Bund Bremen was "Die Hebung des Kinos" (The Elevation of Cinema).

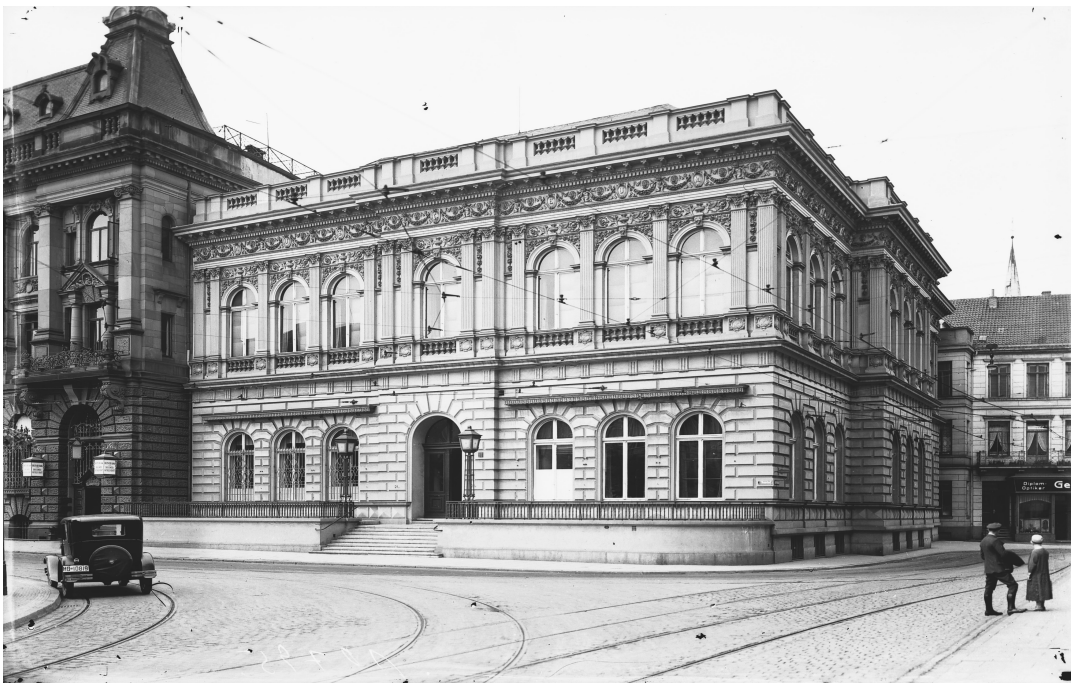


fig. 7: Museum am Domshof, corner of Schüsselkorb, 1925. Current situation: on the left Deutsche Bank, in the middle the entrance to the Domshof Passage, on the right an office building.

We're going to the Domshof now, to the entrance of the Domshof Passage.

4. Domshof 22, formerly Domshof 21a

Museum am Domshof, events with Alfred Metz 1928 / Pierre Ramus 1930

At the corner of Schüsselkorb once stood the "Museum am Domshof". A group of Bremen merchants wanted to promote scientific interest, founded the "Gesellschaft Museum" (museum society) in 1783, and built the house in 1808. Their "Naturalienkabinett" (natural history collection) consisting of cultural artifacts obtained through trade expeditions or acquired at low prices, forms the foundation of today's Übersee-Museum near the train station. The building at Domshof was transferred to Deutsche Bank in 1911. Nevertheless, the Museum am Domshof remained a fixed address for lectures and educational evenings in the 1920s. In 1944, the building was destroyed.

fig. 8: Pierre Ramus (Rudolf Großmann).

fig. 9: Alfred Metz.

On May 8, 1928, Alfred Metz (1892-1967) from Duisburg, a traveling speaker of the anarcho-syndicalist FAUD, came to Bremen on his tour and discussed "Parliamentarism and Bourgeois Democracy" at the Museum am Domshof. The Political Police counted 110 guests.
On May 13, 1930, Pierre Ramus (1882-1942) from Austria, an internationally known anarchist and pacifist, visited the Museum am Domshof on his tour and spoke about Socialism, Culture, and Religion. According to the police, 300 people attended, including 50 from the KPD. The next day, he spoke at the reading school of pastor Heinrich Schultheiß in Bremen-Gröpelingen about Gandhi and the Indian Movement.

We are now walking straight through the weatherproof passages, up Sögestraße on the left, and then right into the Lloydpassage, almost to the end.

5. Lloydpassage, formerly Große Hundestraße 15

Birthplace of anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist Karl Künitz 1877

Where the Kaufhof complex awaits its repurposing, from 1910 to 1945 stood the office building of Norddeutscher Lloyd, a profitable shipping company with overseas ships that transported cargo and emigrants. For the construction of the Lloyd building, a street corner in the Bremen city center was demolished around 1907, including the birthplace of Karl Künitz (1877-1964). This stood roughly in the middle of today's department store.

The worker Karl Künitz was born here on July 8, 1877, and lived here until the end of 1879. Even this corner of Bremen was certainly rundown, noisy, and smoky. By 1897 at the latest, Karl lived in Bremen-Hastedt, where in the summer of 1907 he co-founded the "Verband freier Arbeiter Bremens und Umgegend" (Association of Free Workers of Bremen and Surroundings). This "anarcho-socialist" group already called itself syndicalist, but joined the anarchist AFD. In addition, he co-founded a newly formed AFD and the anarcho-syndicalist FVdG in 1910. For many years, he was considered the "leader" of the Bremen anarchists by the Political Police of Bremen. In his home, reading and discussion evenings were held regularly. With a self-built printing press, he produced agitation material. On June 8, 1913, he was arrested in Syke with Paul Wehrle (Berlin) because they allegedly wanted to break into the savings bank. After World War I, he lived as a riveter in Bremen-Walle and took a leading role in the FAUD, which emerged from the FVdG. When the true offenders of a wage messenger robbery from 1913 in Delmenhorst were caught in 1929, he had to appear as a witness in court in Oldenburg in July 1930. The late-discovered robbers were old comrades who wanted to promote the anti-militarist struggle through "expropriation of the capitalists". The trial caused a nationwide sensation. During the Nazi era, Karl Künitz ran a terrazzo business. The house of his second wife in Bremen-Walle, which provided shelter to many comrades from 1920 onwards, was destroyed in the war. After 1945, Karl Künitz lived as a guard in Bremen-Walle, later in Bremen-Neustadt. He died on May 7, 1964, in Bremen-Lesum.

1880/1881, Karl lived at Pieperstraße 6, where we are now passing by. At the end of the passage, we turn left onto Papenstraße, continue straight ahead, and stop at the next corner (Langenstraße) behind the traffic light.

fig. 10, on the right: Anniversary postcard of the Norddeutscher Lloyd from 1907. Above, the business office from 1857 is suggested. This stood as the second house from the front in Papenstraße at the corner Papenstraße / Große Hundestraße. Around 1877, the surroundings might still look similar like today in Schnoor Quarter. A photo of the Große Hundestraße itself could not be obtained. The Anview at the bottom of this postcard is the corner of Pelzerstraße / Papenstraße with the tower, the Große Hundestraße starts all the way to the right around the corner.

fig. 11: The corner of Langenstraße and Ansgaritränkpforte today. The latter is still a relatively narrow alley today, leading to the Schlachte by the Weser.

6. Ansgaritränkpforte 2, Ecke Langenstraße

Expropriation trial by the anarcho-syndicalist August Isleif 1913

On the morning of August 1, 1913, the messenger from the transport company J. H. Bachmann, with the weekly wages in money bags over his shoulder, turned into Ansgaritränkpforte. On the narrow street stood two men, one with a bicycle. They threw salt and pepper in his eyes, causing the messenger to lose his bearings for a short time. The man with the bike grabbed the bags of money and fled towards Ansgari Church. Through the messenger's cries for help, passersby became aware of the act and chased the cyclist. He threatened the crowd with a secured Browning pistol. A telegraph cable on the road, quickly placed there by cunning workers, finally brought the cyclist down in Ansgarikirchhof (today Hanseatenhof). The coins fell onto the road, and the outraged crowd beat up the brazen robber. The unfortunate cyclist was August Isleif (1881-1968) and later claimed to have planned and acted alone. On November 5, 1913, he was sentenced in Bremen to 6 years in a penal institution, which he served until November 6, 1918, in Bremen-Oslebshausen. Then the remaining sentence was suspended.

The worker August Isleif was born on May 7, 1881, in Bennigsen / Springe. He came to Bremen in 1900 and stayed here in 1905. August had been married since 1906 and lived in Bremen-Hastedt. From August 1907, he became involved with the "Verband freier Arbeiter Bremens und Umgegend", affiliated with the anarchist AFD. He participated in meetings and discussion evenings, agitated in his workplace. From 1910, he was active in the two newly founded groups of the AFD and the anarcho-syndicalist FVdG. In 1912, he received 20 copies of the newspaper "Der freie Arbeiter," which he presumably sold as a reseller. In 1913, he acted as a meeting leader. The Berlin police regularly monitored his payments to the detainee fund and for brochures. With the AFD's Incarcerated Fund, imprisoned people of the movement and their families were supported in solidarity. After August Isleif's own release from imprisonment during the 1918 revolution, he no longer made a political impact. He kept in touch with the old comrades, for example, he stood surety for Hinrich Seekamp's (1879-1957) restitution case after 1945. August Isleif died on August 17, 1968, in Bremen-Hastedt.

For the anarcho-syndicalist group in Bremen, there have been two attempts at non-violent expropriation of capitalists for propaganda against the impending war. One by August Isleif and another on November 28, 1913, in Delmenhorst using sandbags, during which a passing guard was killed by an unexplained shot. Karl Künitz's first wife claimed in 1913 that there had been more such money acquisitions. The police could not prove anything against them.

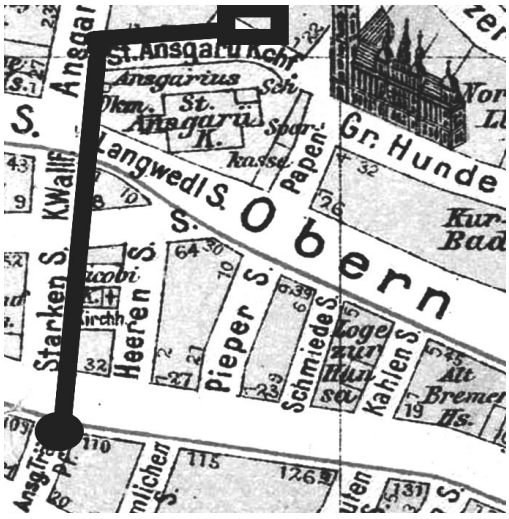


fig. 12: Way of August Isleif on August 1st,1913 through the City (Circle = Robbery, Rectangle = Capture).

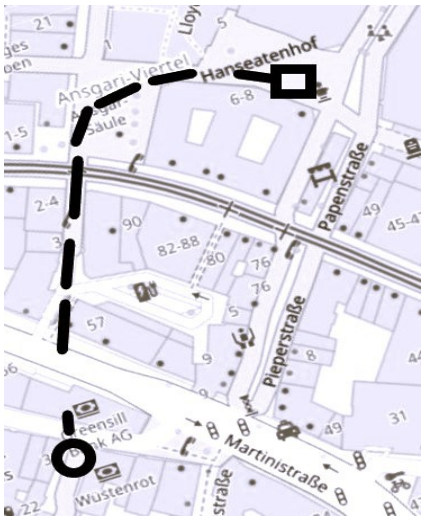


fig. 13: The comparison to today, changed roads and new buildings

You are close to the Weser. If you like, you can look for the rebuilt office of J. H. Bachmann on the Schlachte. The name is on the building (No. 15-18). Otherwise, we will now walk a bit along Martinistraße and then into Langenstraße, towards the marketplace.

fig. 14: Printing House C.A. Nicolaus around 1940.

fig. 15: Erna Kolthek geb. Sauerbrey.

7. Langenstraße 25-29, formerly Langenstraße 17

Workplace of resistance fighter Erna Kolthek, geb. Sauerbrey, 1941

Number 17 was located in the block with the "Essig-Haus" (Vinegar House) from 1618 (Number 13, now 19). It was a tourist magnet before World War II. Now, at No. 19, there is a new complex by Christian Jacobs. An example of how capitalists shape the face of impoverished Bremen. In No. 17 was the printing house C. A. Nicolaus. It was located roughly to the right of the entrance to the parking garage. From the testimony of her colleague and later senator Wilhelm Blase, it can be concluded that Erna Kolthek was arrested here in 1941 "out of her employment" as an inserter.

Erna was only called Kolthek from 1937 to 1948, which is why I refer to her as Erna Sauerbrey (1913-1985). She was born on February 15, 1913, in Köthen, grew up in Jena, and spent her youth in Leipzig. Erna was active in the anarcho-syndicalist SAJD and in the FAUD, worked as a childcare nurse, and was engaged to Waldemar Götze. She was in close contact with the inner circle in Leipzig, which took over the nationwide leadership of the FAUD after 1933. The group coordinated the smuggling of illegal writings as well as the escape of people abroad. Erna was part of it. After the illegal work in Leipzig was uncovered by the Nazis in 1935 and she was briefly held in "pre-trial detention", she fled through Czechoslovakia to Paris, where she participated in the congress of the anarcho-syndicalist IAA. Subsequently, she also acted in the anarcho-syndicalist resistance of the DAS in Amsterdam. In 1937, she married the Dutch anarchist Jan Kolthek, in 1938 they had a daughter together, and in 1939 the couple separated. In April 1941, she moved with her daughter, destitute and under duress, to her parents' home in Bremen-Lehe, Am Lehesterdeich 78a. On June 23, 1941, she was arrested by the Gestapo and taken to Kassel, later to Dresden, where other comrades from her Leipzig "Meute" (pack) were put on trial. Erna was sentenced on January 22, 1942, to 3 years and 3 months in a penitentiary for preparation of high treason, which she served in Waldheim/Saxony. After that, she was placed in "protective custody" in Guxhagen until March 29, 1945. After 1945, she lived in Bremen-Lehe, then Bremen-Vahr, and occasionally in Canada, where her daughter emigrated. Erna Sauerbrey was involved in the anarcho-syndicalist initiative FFS and passed away on June 4, 1985, in Bremen.

fig. 16: Langenstr. 18-12 before 1933, the gable house on the left is No. 17, the Essighaus Nr. 13. The block consisted of Nr. 19 bis 10/11.

fig. 17: On the opposite „Haus Hansa“, Langenstr. 132, about 1910. From 1919 onwards, there was the unemployment welfare here.

Heraus
zur internationalen Kundgebung

am Mittwoch, den 8. Mai 1929, 20 Uhr
im Cafe Lehmkuhl, Waller Heerstraße

gegen Faschismus und Diktatur!

Lucien Huart, Paris u. Therese Souchy sprechen über:

Internationale Kampffront aller Werktätigen gegen den internationalen Kapitalismus!

Erich Mühsam spricht über:

Die Bekämpfung des internationalen Faschismus durch die Arbeiterklasse!

Der Arbeiter-Gesang-Verein Bremen hat seine Mitwirkung zugesagt. Zur Aufführung gelangt der vom Dirigenten Herm. Böse komponierte „Kampfruf“ von Erich Mühsam.

Freie Aussprache! **Eintritt 30 Pfg.**

Freie Arbeiter-Union Deutschlands (Anarcho-Syndikalisten)
Orts-Arbeits-Börse Bremen

Druck: Heinrich Gillner, Düsseldorf, Mindenerstr. 17.

fig. 18:Such a flyer was distributed in front of the employment office on May 7, 1929.

8. Langenstraße 14, formerly Langenstraße 132

Forbidden anarcho-syndicalistic handing-out of flyers 1929

At 132 Lange Straße, diagonally across from No. 17 and to the left of Wilkenstraße, the employment office was located in "Haus Hansa" in 1929. On the morning of May 7, 1929, Bernhard Koch (1901-1983) and Josef Edlinger (1904-1975) were caught by the police while distributing flyers in front of it. In them, they pointed to the event on May 8, 1929, at Cafe Lehmkuhl in Bremen-Walle. On the topic "International Rally Against Fascism and Dictatorship", the French anarcho-syndicalist Lucien Huart was supposed to speak with Therese Souchy, as well as the poet Erich Mühsam (1878-1934). The non-party workers' choir of the teacher Hermann Böse (1870-1943) was also supposed to participate. Perhaps that's why the Gestapo listed Böse as an anarchist in 1938. It turned out differently: Lucien Huart was stuck at the border, so Rudolf Rocker (1873-1958), at that time the most famous anarcho-syndicalist in the world, stepped in for him. According to the police, around 450 guests attended.

Bernhard Koch and Josef Edlinger had offended a decree that prohibited the distribution of political leaflets in Bremen city center. Out of fear of revolt, there were often banned zones around the town hall during the Weimar period, where political activities were not allowed. The two anarcho-syndicalists acted innocent and told the street policeman that their party had given them the assignment. The police officer was subsequently informed by his colleagues that the two leaflet distributors were the leaders of the FAUD Bremen, meaning they themselves held "the party leadership". They were fined two Reichsmarks on May 10, 1929, or alternatively sentenced to two days in jail. In the lead-up to the same event, on May 7, 1929, a little earlier, at 5:55 AM, the anarcho-syndicalist Wilhelm Ahting (1875-1940) was caught distributing leaflets at Hafenkopf II in the Bremen harbor area. The distribution of political leaflets in the port area was also prohibited.

Josef "Sepp" Edlinger was born on January 2, 1904, in Brunn, Austria. He was a carpenter and lived in Bremen from 1928 to 1939. He became involved in the FAUD no later than 1929. After the war, he lived in Austria again and died there on May 3, 1975, in Lanzenkirchen.

Bernhard Koch was born on May 29, 1901, in Bremen-Findorff. In 1912, his parents moved with him and at least three siblings to Bremen-Walle into a small Bremer Haus. Bernhard had been active as an anarcho-syndicalist and anarchist since 1921. As "Anarchist Koch," he appeared as a speaker in many meetings. For the FAUD, he delivered a protest note to the American consul at Wall 80 in Bremen in January 1927, which greatly disturbed him. They wanted to do "everything" to ensure that the anarchists Sacco & Vanzetti, who were sentenced to death in the USA, would be released. During the Weimar period, "Bernd" lived in Bremen-Walle and worked in the harbor. He was a freethinker, antimilitarist, and literature head of the FAUD in Bremen. After 1945, Bernhard lived with his wife Erna, née Zentner, in the parcel area of Bremen-Schwachhausen. He wanted to found a new anarcho-syndicalist group in Bremen. Instead, he reestablished the "Gilde freiheitlicher Bücherfreunde" (Guild of Free-Spirited Book Lovers, GfB), which had been a cultural organization of the FAUD before 1933. Bernhard did everything he could to publish Rudolf Rocker's work "Nationalism and Culture" in German, in Germany. From 1949 on, after long struggles with the publisher and the occupying forces, it was published as "Die Entscheidung des Abendlandes" (The Decision of the Occident) in two volumes by Oetinger Verlag in Hamburg. Bernhard died on April 16, 1983, in Bremen.

fig. 19: Image of people from the anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist movement the Weimar period in Bremen, with Ramus (Großmann) as a guest (5th from the right).

Let's continue! Straight on Langenstraße, turn right just before the marketplace, turn right again, and follow the road to the traffic light. At the square on the left is the next station.

9. Martinistraße 27, formerly Kirchenstraße 3

Residence of anarchist Ernst Töniges 1913/1914, Kirchenstraße 10

We are standing in front of a house from the 1960s. The Rococo elements of the house come from the bourgeois house built in 1750 on Martinistraße 11. Behind these walls, Friedrich Engels completed a merchant apprenticeship in 1838. The house were demolished in 1897 and the stones were reused as elements for the construction of the house at Lange Straße 70. That new building was destroyed in World War II, and the elements ended up here at the house. So they also have a city tour behind them, and they are an expression of using old architectural elements without context. To the right of the house, before World War II, Kirchenstraße led up towards the marketplace and soon intersected with Breedenstraße again.

At Kirchenstraße 10, the tailor Ernst Töniges (1876-1955) lived from at least 1913 to 1919. He was born on June 2, 1876, in Dortmund. After the death of his parents in 1878/1879, he presumably stayed with relatives along with his siblings. In 1905, he moved to Bremen. Ernst Töniges was active in the anarchist AFD in 1913/1914. In 1913, he obtained 25 copies of the association's newspaper "Der freie Arbeiter", presumably for resale. He was thus active at a time when expropriations were being discussed and carried out in these circles. After that, he no longer appears politically. Maybe because he became self-employed as a tailor in 1914. He remained in private contact with his comrades, such as August Pansch. I mention Ernst here because he lived in this place during his active time, and in a federal structure, every person is important with their contribution. Ernst Töniges died on December 5, 1955, in Bremen-Osterholz. He would be a good example of how difficult it is to historically research unmarried people. Only between 1919 and 1922 Ernst was briefly married. Thanks to his tailor shop, he can be traced in the address books. His addresses were all located in the city center until 1942: Kirchenstraße 10 (1913-1919), Buchtstraße 20 (1919-1923), Am Markt 9 (1924-1935), Seemannstraße 13 (1936-1942).

We are now walking down Martinistraße towards Domsheide and turning left into Böttcherstraße. The Schlachte is also nearby here. Treat yourself!

fig. 20: Kirchenstraße (Bremen City) about 1910. Today, a hotel complex stands here.

fig. 21: Kirchenstraße on the City-Map of Pharus from 1902.

4/5 Packh. v. J. F. Finke & Co.
6 Borgstede & Ricklefs, Kontor.
7 Specht, J. H. A., Schlossermstr.
8 Walter, C. H., Maler.
Kohlhagen, C. H., Tischler.
9 Reimann, F. R., Wwe. Händlerin.
11 Osterloh, H., Wwe., Fischräucherei.
Osterloh, A., Detaillist.
12 Deichholz, J. H., Maurer.
Brockmann, H. W. L., Maurer.
13a Klaefker, H. C., Arbtr.
Wöhlke, G. H., Wwe., Händlerin.
Tweitmann, H., Ehefr., Händlerin.
Pohlmann, C. H. W., Arbtr.
13b Eggers, J. B. D., Hausmstr.
14 Witte, H. C. A., Schuhmmstr.
Grube, H. A., Ehefr.
Hinrichs, Hinrica.
15× Brauerei von Haake & Co.
16× Schröder, J. H., Tischlermstr.
Schröder, C. L., Eisendreher.
Fette, O. A. H., Schuhm.
Vogelsang, H. F., Wwe.
Vogelsang, F. L. H., Schneidermstr.
Vogelsang, Adelheid, Schneiderin.
Winter, Th. H. J., Tischler.
17 Müller, B. R., Dienstmann.
19× Packhaus von C. E. Meyer.

fig. 22: No. 16 with carpenter Theodor Winter (sen.) Bremen address book 1904.

fig. 23: Böttcherstraße, from the square in front of No. 16, direction market place, front left is Haake.

10. Böttcherstraße 3-5, formerly Bötticherstraße 16

Residence of Theodor Winter sen. (and jun.) 1902

This is the last stop of the anarcho-syndicalist sightseeing tour with a small gift for the party-communist folks. With this, the tourist program also begins. This is more for people who are not from Bremen or are completely new here. Feel free.

There is nothing left of the old Bötticherstraße. The successful merchant Ludwig Roselius (from 1906 Kaffee HAG, from 1929 Kaba), who invented decaffeinated coffee, bought up the rundown quarter and tore it down. He built the new Böttcherstraße together with artists like Bernhard Hoetger, in an aesthetically mystical sense. It was meant to be a street of artisans. Böttcherstraße 3 & 5 was built as "Haus St. Petrus" from 1924 to 1927. In 1944, Böttcherstraße was destroyed and rebuilt by 1954. Today, there are taverns located at numbers 3-5. No. 16 extended from the corner of the house to the restaurant advertisement (StÄV).

From 1902 to 1904, the carpenter Theodor Winter (1870-1926) lived here with his family. He was born on February 25, 1870, in Münster, married in 1893 in Tönning, and was found in Bremen from 1896 on, but only appeared as an activist in 1926. In the association's newspaper "Der Syndikalist", the FAUD Bremen published an obituary for him because he passed away on July 31, 1926. He was described as a loyal comrade. For people who were thought to be dead, it was less common, but a few years later, a Theodor Winter reappeared at anarcho-syndicalist events and praised the competing centralist KPD. How did it happen? Theodor Winter had a son named Theodor. He was born on April 15, 1902, at this location. In 1928, he married Elly Pieck, the daughter of Wilhelm Pieck, later President of the GDR. With her and his in-laws, he moved to Berlin and fled to Moscow during the Nazi era. In 1943, he parachuted behind the front lines in Poland. He was supposed to promote the illegal work of the KPD and wanted to go to Berlin. Discovered by the Nazis, he was taken to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Since autumn 1944, there has been no sign of life from him. He was honored in 1974 in an exhibition in the lower town hall as a Bremen resistance fighter.

We continue straight ahead to the marketplace.

11. Marktplatz, Marketplace, town hall and Roland

Tourist-program

Across the red-paved Balge, you come to the marketplace. The Balge was a tributary of the Weser, along whose banks the port of Bremen was located in the Middle Ages. As the Balge accumulated more and more soil and silted up, a new harbor was built at the Schlachte.

On the marketplace, to the left, lies the row of houses with the house "Am Markt 9", a residence of Ernst Töniges. The house was destroyed in the war and rebuilt in 1963. Next to it is "Am Markt 11" with a facade from 1894, replicated and rebuilt in 1960. "True Crime" fans, who enjoy getting spooked by real criminal cases, might know the "Raths-Konditorei" there, where the owner was stabbed by his rival in 1974. Heinrich Hannover, the "RAF lawyer," defended the lover of the pastry chef's wife. He wrote about that and more in his memoirs "Die Republik vor Gericht" (The Republic in Court), Volume 2 (1975-1995). In front of the row of houses stands the 5.55-meter-high Roland from the year 1404. He is a symbol of the medieval Hanse, representing the urban rights and freedoms of the citizens against the nobility. Next to this symbol of civic imperialism and economic liberalism stands the town hall from 1412 with a Baroque facade from 1612. Additionally, the Bremen Bürgerschaft (the "parliament" of Bremen) from 1966 and the splendid Schütting of the merchants from 1538, now the seat of the Chamber of Commerce, are also located here in the square. The marketplace has existed in this form since the 14th century.

fig. 24: The Bremen marketplace in 1930 with the old house at Am Markt 9, 2nd from the right.

Here at the marketplace, the revolution for Bremen was declared on November 6, 1918. The mutinous sailors were freed from the Bremen-Oslebshausen prison. On November 14, 1918, the Workers' and Soldiers' Council was established, which prepared the Bremen council republic until January 10, 1919. It was defeated on February 4, 1919, by the troops of Gerstenberg appointed by Noske (SPD), together with civic Freikorps under Caspari. In the defense of the council republic, the FVdG comrades Wilhelm Glock (1889-1919) and Carl Meseke (1897-1919) died. The capitalist power structures were restored, and a bourgeois national assembly was elected. In contrast, the "Roter Soldatenbund" (Red Soldiers' League, RSB), which existed in Bremen until June 1919, opposed this. Head of the RSB was the anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist Hinrich Seekamp (1879-1957), among other engaged comrades like Franz Martin (1878-1957) and Ernst Klaußner (1876-1970). Despite their struggle, anarcho-syndicalists were only involved in the council republic if they were members of leftist parties. Like the SPD veteran, later communist and anarcho-syndicalist comrade Wilhelm Buchholz (1877-1956), who took over the supervision of the Bremen police during the council period. He advocated for the participation of syndicalists during the council meetings. A left over from that time are the negotiating, curtailed, and centrally organized works councils, without any political function.

An excursion into the history of the "Bremen Left Radicals", if you like: Unlike in the rest of the German Empire, in 1914, large parts of the "Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands" (Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD) in Bremen were against the war. The war loans, which the SPD approved in Berlin on August 4, 1914, were otherwise celebrated, as was the entire war. Therefore, in 1916, a conservative Mehrheits-SPD (majority, M-SPD) split off first, which wanted to continue the course from Berlin. Then a breakaway Unabhängigkeits-SPD (independent, U-SPD) emerged, which represented a moderate but socialist direction. In the original SPD of Bremen, the most radical social democrats remained, who first co-founded the "Internationale Kommunisten Deutschlands" (International Communists of Germany, IKD) and then the "Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands" (Communist Party of Germany, KPD).These three forces constituted the actors of the workers' councils in Bremen, with the M-SPD always in conflict with the other parties. Also from the KPD, the leftist "Communist Workers' Party of Germany" (KAPD) split off in the following period.

12. Schoppensteel, Bremen Town Musicians

Tourist-Program

To the left behind the Roland there is a small square, framed by the Town Hall, the Church Unser Lieben Frauen, and the Bürgerhäuser or their replicas. "Schoppensteel" is Low German for "pillory", which suggests that there may have been an early place of execution here. To the right of the town hall, you will find the statue of the Bremen Town Musicians in this square. It is usually smaller than expected and often surrounded, as touching the front donkey's legs simultaneously is said to bring good luck. The people of Bremen say: "If only one leg is touched, one donkey shakes hands with another." The 2-meter-high bronze statue was designed by Gerhard Marcks in 1951.

The tale of the Bremen Town Musicians by the Brothers Grimm from 1819 can be read as an emancipatory story: Four older animals have worn themselves out on their respective farms, and now death threatens them from their owners. They independently decide to start a new life and leave their homes. They meet on the street and unite to become town musicians in Bremen. "Something better than death, you'll find everywhere!" Because they can't make it to Bremen in one day, they want to spend the night in a forest near Bremen. In the process, they find a hideout of robbers who are having a good time there. The animals stack themselves in front of a window of the house and play loud music. The robbers are so startled by the noise and the huge shadow that they leave the house. An attempt to retake the house fails because a robber is confronted with the characteristics of the respective animals. He attributes all the characteristics to an eerie power and flees. From then on, the animals — a donkey, a dog, a cat, and a rooster — live in the house.

If you want to experience the atmosphere of a historical bourgeois Bremen trading office, I recommend you check out the Hachez chocolate shop here at the square in house Markt 1.

For the last tourist stop, we walk past the Town Musicians, along the church and the town hall to the Domshof. Directly on the square, there is a black square stone in the cobblestone pavement.

13. Domshof / Sandstraße, Spuckstein, Spitting Stone

Tourist-Program

At the side of the cathedral, approximately halfway between the town hall and the former building of the Bremen Bank from 1904 at the entrance of Sandstraße, a black stone is embedded in the cobblestones. The basalt stone, approximately 20x20 cm in size and located about 20 m directly in front of the cathedral's bridal portal, can easily be overlooked.

This stone commemorates Gesche Gottfried, née Timm, widow of Miltenberg. She was sentenced to death because she poisoned 15 people from her immediate surroundings with arsenic. Here, Gesche Gottfried was executed on April 21, 1831. It was the last public execution in Bremen. 35,000 people are said to have witnessed the state-sanctioned murder. The Bremen society spat on this stone in the following centuries as a sign of their disgust towards Gesche's actions.
Rainer Werner Fassbinder adapted the fate of Gesche Gottfried into a play in 1971 while he was working at the Schauspielhaus in Bremen. The drama "Bremer Freiheit" (Freedom of Bremen) was filmed in 1972 and published the same year along with other plays in his book "Antitheater 2". He portrays a Gesche who struggles for independence in the stuffy, Hanseatic, patriarchal society. A man always determines her and her fate, she always has to bend. With arsenic, she gradually gains freedom. It is precisely through a certain degree of artistic freedom that Fassbender's drama provokes thoughts on the extent to which a society with rigid power and moral structures is complicit in such tragedies.

We have reached the end of the tour. If you walk through the Sandstraße, you can see the "Buchte" of Station 1 on the left.

You want to see more? Okay.

For that, you can just continue along Buchtstraße. At the corner of Ostertorstraße, you will see the police station from 1908 on the left side, which is now the city library. As wage-dependent workers, Hinrich Seekamp and comrades were employed in its construction in 1907. They were taken off the construction site and detained at the police station when the emperor and king passed through. The police were afraid of an anarchist assassination.

fig. 25: Police station, now city library, built from 1906-1908, among others by Hinrich Seekamp and comrades, meanwhile detained at the police station.

fig. 26: Schnoor No. 39-35, front left Schnoor 38, residence of Karl Künitz around 1919.

14. Schnoor 38 – *Not yet tired? Very last station*

Tourist-Program, residence of Karl Künitz 1919

Attention! This point is not accessible. The path is steep and the surface is uneven cobblestones laid in narrow alleys. Maybe it will work out, for example, in solidarity with mutual help.

On the other side of Ostertorstraße, the Marterburg leads to Schnoor. The Schnoor is considered the last old Bremen corner. Some houses date back to the 15th century. The narrow alleys that lead to built-up backyards, through which hardly a handcart can pass, were common in the city center of Bremen and the adjacent neighborhoods. For the beginning of the 20th century, I would describe it like this: The narrower the alleys, the worse the living conditions, and the poorer the population. The word "Schnoor" is said to come from "Schnur" (string) referring to the rope makers who originally lived here and settled near the harbor. Until the Nazi era, there was a nearly identical neighborhood at the other end of the city center in St. Stephani, known as the Krummenviertel. This was demolished during the construction of the first bridge for the Bundesstraße 6. Both quarters were very run-down at that time and inhabited by very poor people. The Schnoor was also threatened with demolition, even after 1945. Demolishing slums, displacing the population, and building fancy commercial buildings has a tradition in Bremen. Only in the late 1950s did the Bremen Senate decide to preserve and renovate the Schnoor district. Today, alongside the marketplace and Böttcherstraße, it is *the* tourist showcase of Bremen. In the summer, there is no way through on many weekends. Even during the Christmas market, you should avoid the crowded Schnoor district.

To show that there can be anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist traces around every corner, I garnish this point in the tourist program with a brief piece of information: The main street of the Schnoor district is the Schnoor. In number 38 lived the aforementioned anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist Karl Künitz in 1919. The house itself is no longer standing, but the surroundings have hardly changed in terms of shapes and distances. In 1920, he was already living in Bremen-Walle with his second wife.

This is really the last stop. Further ones you have to explore yourself. :-)

Glossary:

AFD – Anarchistische Föderation Deutschlands (Anarchist Federation of Germany). Founded in 1900 as the Vertrauensmänner Zentralisation Deutschlands (German Federation of Confidential People), renamed in 1903, and became FKAD in 1919.

BfSuA – Bund freier Sozialisten und Anarchisten (Federation of Free Socialists and Anarchists). Anarchist Federation 1959 to after 1971.

DAS – Deutsche Anarcho-Syndikalisten im Ausland (German Anarcho-Syndicalists Abroad). Emigration and Resistance Organization of the FAUD from 1933 to 1945.

"Der freie Arbeiter" (The Free Worker) – Association organ of the anarchist AFD, later the FKAD. It was published between 1904 and 1933 with repeated bans.

"Der Pionier" (The Pioneer) – alongside "Die Einigkeit", more of a theoretical association organ of the FVdG from 1911 to 1914, repeatedly banned. Editorial staff, among others: F. Kater.

"Der Syndikalist" (The Syndicalist) – Association organ of the FVdG, later the FAUD from 1919 to 1932, repeatedly banned. Successors: "Arbeiter-Echo" (Workers Echo) and "Der Arbeitslose" (The Non-Worker).

FAU – Freie Arbeiterinnen und Arbeiter-Union (Free Workers' Union). Later called: Freie Arbeiter*innen-Union (Free Workers' Union). Anarcho-syndicalist union since 1977.

FAUD – Freie Arbeiter-Union Deutschlands (Anarcho-Syndikalisten), shortly F.A.U.D. (A.-S.). Means: Free Workers' Union of Germany (Anarcho-Syndicalists). Emerging from the FVdG, an anarcho-syndicalist union from 1919 to 1933.

FFS – Föderation Freiheitlicher Sozialisten (Federation of Libertarian Socialists). Anarcho-syndicalist interest association 1947-1970. Saw itself as the successor to the FAUD.

FKAD – Föderation Kommunistischer Anarchisten Deutschlands (Federation of Communist Anarchists of Germany). Emerging from the AFD. Existed from 1919 to 1933.

FVdG – Freie Vereinigung deutscher Gewerkschaften (Free Association of German Trade Unions). Founded in 1897 as a localized centralization of trust representatives in Germany, renamed in 1901, and by 1908 at the latest, without any influence from the Social Democrats.

IAA – Internationale Arbeiter-Assoziation (International Workers' Association), later: Internationale ArbeiterInnen-Assoziation. Today: Internationale Arbeiter*innen-Assoziation. Also: IWA (English), AIT (Spanish). Anarcho-syndicalist International, exists since 1922.

"Kampf" (struggle) – anarcho-syndicalist magazine from Hamburg 1912-1914. The editorial team included, among others, Paul Schreyer.

SAJD – Syndikalistisch-Anarchistische Jugend Deutschlands (Syndicalist-Anarchist Youth of Germany). Independent youth organization from 1921 to 1933, cooperating with the FAUD.

Register of Illustrations:

Cover Image: Basis is from Pixabay, modified by T. Feix
fig. 1: (Map) SimplyMaps, modified by T. Feix.
fig. 2: (Poster by FAU 2006) Archiv Helge Döhring.
fig. 3: (Poster by FAU 2009) Archiv Helge Döhring.
fig. 4: (Violenstr. 17) Landesamt für Denkmalschutz Bremen, Nr. 00001189a02.
fig. 5: (Event with Häfker) StAB 4.65 Nr. 518, Bl. 33 vom 23.08.1919.
fig. 6: (Hermann Häfker) Arolsen Archives, Dok-ID: 125838059.
fig. 7: (Museum am Domshof) StAB 10.B FN 7-1268
fig. 8: (Ramus/Großmann) Stockholm Stadtsarkivet, Anarkistar.
fig. 9: (Alfred Metz) LAV R, RW 0058 Nr. 57946.
fig. 10: (Jubileecard Lloyd) Postcard, private.
fig. 11: (Langenstraße / Ansgaritränkpforte) Tabea Feix 2025.
fig. 12: (Map Expropriation I) Pharus-Plan from 1902, StAB 11-2162, modified by T. Feix.
fig. 13: (Map Expropriation II) Open Streetmaps, modified by T. Feix.
fig. 14: (C. A. Nicolaus) StAB 10.B FS Nr. 90.
fig. 15: (Erna Kolthek) StAB 4.54. E Nr. 750.
fig. 16: (Langenstr. 18-12) Postcard, private.
fig. 17: (Langenstr. 132) StAB 10.B FN 7 Nr. 1442.
fig. 18: (Flyer 1929) StAB 4.65 Nr. 521.
fig. 19: (Group Bremen) StAB 7.200.
fig. 20: (Kirchenstraße) StAB 10.B PK 205-1, © Focke-Museum / H. Beckmann, Nr. 160 (Inv. Nr. 2005.198-938).
fig. 21: (Kirchenstraße Map) Pharus-Plan from 1902, StAB 11-2162.
fig. 22: (Adress book Böttcherstraße) Bremer Adressbuch von 1904.
fig. 23: (Böttcherstr. 15-10) StAB 10.B PK 151-3, found in: StAB 10.B Al 282, © Focke-Museum / H. Beckmann Nr. 145*
fig. 24: (Am Markt) StAB 10.B PK 69-87, found in StAB 10.B Al 80 Bd. 1, © Focke-Museum / H. Beckmann Nr. 528 (Inv. Nr. 2017.074-26).
fig. 25: (Police Office) Postcard, private.
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*The Focke Museum took over the collection of H. Beckmann years ago, but has not yet cataloged all the photos, which is why no Focke inventory number can be provided here.

Notes:

The basis for this issue are the research for my planned environmental study and the comprehensive work of Helge Döhring, especially:
Zwischen Hafenarbeit und Sexualhygiene. Anarcho-Syndikalismus an der Unterweser 1918-1933. Bremen. Bremerhaven, Delmenhorst, Worpswede. Verlag Edition AV, Bodenburg 2024. 466 Seiten, 24 Euro.

You can reach Helge through the Institut für Syndikalismusforschung (Institute für Syndicalism Research): https://syndikalismusforschung.wordpress.com/

This city guide is a project of "hist.AS Nordwest", a blog with the aim of making anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist lifes in Northwest Germany visible.

hist.AS Nordwest

Biographie-Forschung in der
historischen anarcho-syndikalistischen
Bewegung in Nordwest-Deutschland

You can find the blog about it here: https://histasnordwest.wordpress.com/

There, you will find not only information about the project "hist.AS Nordwest" but also details about the planned social study with the working title: "Anarcho-Syndicalism in Bremen between 1898 and 1955". Using the method of prosopography, approximately 250 biographies of the movement are currently being compiled and compared.

The Free Workers' Union Bremen (FAU) is in the founding phase. If you're interested in actively shaping anarcho-syndicalism, check this out:
https://www.fau.org/vor-ort/bremen

At the A-Cafe Bremen you can discuss anarchistic topics with other people: https://acafebremen.noblogs.org/

For better printing, the images were discolored.
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